

## **GRSC FUNDAMENTALS OF COMPETITION**

In preparing for your swimmer's meets, the following are some basic fundamentals of competition that GRSC coaches stress.

1. Each swimmer should compete with him/herself. It is more beneficial to improve one's time and gain experience in a new event than to win a ribbon or medal.

2. In addition to earning best times, the coaches praise swimmers for working on technique and/or racing strategies. Please note that it is possible that a swimmer won't improve his/her time when s/he tries something new (e.g., flip turns, technique, etc.) However, if a swimmer continues to try a new skill or technique, s/he will improve more in the long run.

3. The swimmers are taught to set realistic, measurable goals, and as they get older, they are taught to relate performance in practice to their goal times. These are communicated and discussed during practice dry-time. We, as coaches, will never ask a swimmer to know or achieve something we haven't discussed previously.

4. The coaching staff encourages age-group swimmers to swim every event they are eligible for. This helps to promote versatility since swimmers are continuously switching best events as they grow, mature, and change body shapes and sizes. This skill set is measured by USA Swimming in the form of a swimmer's IMX or IMR score and is used to determine eligibility for exclusive opportunities such as the Jr National Team and other elite status.

5. Sportsmanship is a non-negotiable. We expect all swimmers, parents, and coaches to respect the officials, competitors, and the facilities we use. We also want swimmers to encourage and support their teammates.

6. SUCCESS = Improving one's own, best self and following the plan given by your coaching staff.

## **Best Practices for Swim Meets**

Listed below are in-depth guidelines geared to help you through your first couple of swim meets. It may seem a little overwhelming, but we tried to be as detailed and specific as possible.

### **Swim Meet Procedures -Before the meet**

1. The week before the meet, check the entries for your swimmer, which will be available on your TeamUnify account. If there are any problems with your swimmer's entries, let your swimmer's coach know as soon as possible.
2. Find out where you're going. Make sure you know where the pool is located. The address to the pool is always on the first page of the Meet Information. Find out what time warm-ups begin for your swimmer. Most meets are held in two sessions—morning and afternoon and are typically separated by AGE. You need only attend the session in which your swimmer swims. Allow for plenty of time to get where you are going. Swimmers should arrive at the pool 15 minutes prior to the start of warm ups. The meet warm-up time is listed in the meet information, as well as on the GRSC website event page.

### **What to Bring to a Meet**

Be sure to put your swimmer's name on all belongings and equipment!

1. Team swimsuit
2. (2) team swim caps
3. (2) pairs of goggles
4. GRSC team t-shirts -check the itinerary to see what tshirt color to wear to the pool each day. Shorts or leggings. Swimmers are required to wear clothing between events.
5. (2) towels minimum
6. Foldable chair
7. Food—nutritious snacks
8. Water bottle
9. Sun protection
10. Athletic shoes. Swimmers are required to wear athletic shoes between events at competitions.
10. Rain or cold clothing ( windbreaker, boots, extra warm clothing)

### **The night before:**

Check the team website or host team website for a link to Heat Sheets ( sometimes an app like On Deck or Meet Mobile will also have this information.) The Meet information will tell you where

to find Heat Sheets. Write the Event number, Heat and Lane on their hand with a sharpie marker. By writing information on the back of the swimmer's hand, the swimmer can watch and listen for his or her events to be seeded and remember what the events are. This also allows the swimmer to check whether he or she is in the correct heat and lane behind the block. The information on the hand represents the swimmer's individual events at the meet the swimmer is attending. Make up your own shorthand; for example, on the hand below, the 50 Free is Event 6, Heat 4, Lane 4.



### The day of the meet:

1. When you arrive, locate the Gulliver team area where all team members sit.
2. Warm-ups are always conducted by the GRSC coaching staff. It is very important for all swimmers to warm-up with the team. Swimmers' bodies are just like cars on a cold day—they need to get the engine going and warmed-up before they can go all out in a race. If, for some reason outside your control, your swimmer will be late to a warm-up session, contact their group coach ASAP.
3. All GRSC swimmers are required to wear the team suit and GRSC team cap during both warm-ups and actual competition. Swimmers also are asked to wear their team t-shirts. Wearing the complete team uniform promotes team unity and pride.
4. Each swimmer is responsible for knowing which events s/he is swimming and for being on time to swim his/her event. Swimmers are required to sit with the team and to visit parents outside of the deck only when it does not interfere with warming up/down, and speaking with a coach post and pre race.
5. In between races, swimmers are asked to rest and stay warm. All energy should be stored up and used in competition. If swimmers must eat, a light, nutritious snack is recommended. Sodas, energy drinks and sugary snacks are not recommended.
6. At the conclusion of each race, the swimmer should ask the lane timers for the stopwatch time. Younger swimmers are expected to go immediately to their coach. Older swimmers should warm down first, if possible, and then see their coach. The coach discusses the race with each swimmer individually and gives positive comments concerning splits, stroke technique, and race strategy.

7. Electronic timing is used at most meets. Generally, the official time is the one recorded in the computer when the swimmer touches the touch pad. This time appears on the scoreboard. However, if a swimmer misses the touch pad, or if there is a mechanical failure, various back-up times may be used. The timing and score keeping personnel analyze all times to determine the official times, which are then posted as final results. Apps like ONdeck and Meet Mobile are helpful to find results/splits but they are considered UNOFFICIAL. Official results are posted from the host team at the conclusion of a session/meet. A printout of the electronic results will be posted in a specified area near the pool, usually within 15 minutes of the race. Check the results and record your swimmer's time in your program. Later you can record it in your swimmer's logbook.

NOTE: According to USA Swimming rules, parents are not allowed in the immediate competition venue unless they are serving in an official capacity. Similarly, all questions concerning meet results, an officiating call, or the conduct of a meet should be referred to the coaching staff. They, in turn, will pursue the matter through the proper channels.

8. It is very important that parents and/or swimmers check with the coaching staff prior to leaving the swim meet, making certain that their swimmer has not been placed on a relay or needs to come back for finals ( if in a prelims/finals meet)

**It all may seem overwhelming at first, but remember this is supposed to be fun. Sit back, take a deep breathe, and enjoy watching your child compete!! Go Raiders!**